DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 143 023 CS 203 570

AUTHOR Clements, Robert J.
TITLE World Literature Tomorrow.
PUB DATE 77
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the Modern Language Association; Reprinted from "World Literature Today" (formerly "Books Abroad"), vol. 51, no. 2, Spring 1977, pp. 180-186

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Comparative Analysis; Educational Needs; Educational Theories; Global Approach; Graduate Study; Higher Education; *Literature Appreciation; *Program Development; Resource Materials; *World Literature

ABSTRACT

The development of a curriculum for graduate-level education in world literature, a logical extension of comparative literature, poses many problems. Among these is the misinterpretation and misuse of the term "world literature," which should be defined as literature from all over the world that is taught by those who read it in the original language. In addition to the problem presented by the language barrier, accurate representation of countries or geographic areas and the politicization of literature are issues that must be confronted. For the essential first step in undertaking a census of existing texts and translations for use in graduate study, several bibliographical tools are available: UNESCO's registry of worldwide translations, microfilm and microfiche bibliographies, international literary clubs, university presses, and so on. Once syllabi are constructed, group teaching by instructors of different nationalities or instruction by polyglot teachers can help to alleviate the language problem. (KS)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED143023

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

World Literature Today

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND THE ERIC SYSTEM CONTRACTORS."

World Literature Tomorrow

By ROBERT J. CLEMENTS

I am honored to speak under the aegis of *Books Abroad* on the eve of its golden anniversary. The contribution of this distinguished magazine has been fulsomely acknowledged in the recent Autumn issue by such conspicuous scholars and writers that I feel indeed, like Dante, the last *tra cotanto senno*. The dedication, imagination and sheer energy of Ivar Ivask and his eminent predecessors have made *Books Abroad* unique among literary journals, a tribute I am happy to pay here, having long since paid it in print. I remember that when Norman Cousins was trying to convert *Saturday Review* into a so-called *World Magazine*, I protested that this was an empty title unless his magazine had a world content and outlook. I reminded him that the only American literary magazine with such an outlook was *Books Abroad*. Thus it seems most appropriate to me that Ivask and his editors are renaming their journal *World Literature Today*. This recognition of the imminence of World Literature as a well-defined, carefully-constructed discipline is welcome. It is a statement of faith that a long-dreamed goal is drawing ever closer and that there is no need to wait for the next jubilee year to celebrate its being commonly discussed and taught. If I have cautiously substituted "tomorrow" in my title for the "today" of Ivask's journal, I am no less optimistic than he that this discipline, consistently defined and ethically presented, will before long become part of school curricula.

For World Literature is the logical third stage of Comparative Literature. The first stage was of course the Western Heritage, which Dean Weisinger too severely branded as "a confining concept" to which "many comparatists enslave themselves." The second step of course is East-West Literature, in which tentative courses are being tried. I shall return to this step below. Finally, there remains the goal of World Literature, encompassing the two previous categories. This *littérature universelle* is becoming at last an academic reality to which we may legitimately, if cautiously, aspire, but one on whose demands even Goethe probably never reflected while making his titillating remark about *Weltliteratur*. Indeed, as François Jost has made clear, Goethe's call was actually for an East-West (*West-Östliche*) dimension to literature. *Weltliteratur* is something even further, the *Krönung* (to use a favorite word of Goethe) and utmost demonstration of comparatism. René Wellek writes in his *Theory of Literature*: "Goethe himself saw that this [*Weltliteratur*] is a very distant ideal, that no single nation is willing to give up its individuality. Today we are possibly even further removed from such a state of amalgamation, and we would argue that we cannot even wish that the diversities of national literatures should be obliterated." Obviously Comparative Literature often departs from similarities to the examination of meaningful contrast. The real excitement of our discipline, however, and indeed its challenge, remains in the mythic, generic and other homogeneities inexplicably occurring over two millennia on our five continents. It is more exciting to discover that a great number of folk epics include a trip to the afterworld than to observe that a lesser number do not. Little is to be gained by proving that there are exceptions to Otto Rank's comparative observation about the birth and death of the epic hero. It is intriguing to discover that epic heroes even among the Araucanian pagans must have twelve paladins (i.e., disciples), even at the cost of their individuality.

I should like first today to dwell on the remaining problems in achieving world literature, and then proceed to some of the resources which will help us to resolve these problems. The first difficulty to be eliminated is the misuse of the phrase "World Literature" in academia itself. I can find no more striking example of this than in a recent report circulated by the South Central Comparative Literature Association bearing the incredible statistic that 91% of college departments surveyed in that region offer World Literature courses, usually at the Junior rather than Senior level, whereas few Comparative Literature courses exist. SUNY-Albany, in our own area, boasted a Department of Comparative and World Literature, with no World Literature courses listed. Indeed the department has folded. We know from *The Teacher's Guide to World Literature*, prepared for the National Council of Teachers of English, that the term is applied at best, as in the SCCLA survey, to Western classics in translation. When I was preparing for a major publisher a Western Heritage undergraduate anthology in English, I was informed that the book was to be advertised as "World Literature" to increase sales. We must not accept easy outs. World Literature as a discipline means the study of literature from the maximum geographical extent where major authors are found (see below), taught as

CS203570

often as possible by teachers who read those authors in the original language. Its method must be that of comparatism rather than of random samplings.

World Literature, our third phase, must establish in its wide area meaningful points of contact and assimilation, most conveniently through the familiar approaches of theme, form and movement. We may have to adjust our definitions and critical vocabulary. Some years ago, while planning with R. K. Das Gupta three East-West courses to be given alternately at NYU and his university in India, I proposed a course on five Western and five Asian tragedies. He reminded me that whereas Aristotle's generic approach might have some value for epic poetry, it was irrelevant to Indian theatre. The course would have to deal instead with "drama." The first World (like the first East-West) Literature courses will have to sift out common denominators which may best bring differing literatures into juxtaposition.

The greatest deterrent to World Literature is of course the language problem, already a challenge to any comparatist, especially if we are to sample the major literary works of the five continents. Africa, which would seem at first to present the major language problem, presents fortuitously little difficulty, for the literary vehicles will remain French and English. Portuguese will surely decline, especially as the chief theme of its poetry, liberation, has been achieved. The same fate awaits Afrikaans. Although the Negro poet Samuel Allen defines the negritude movement as "representative of the Negro African poet's endeavor for his race a normal self-pride," the leaders, with their European schooling and syncretic tendencies, do not espouse black native languages. Their writing and their editing of *Présence Africaine* is in French or English. Some Africans wrote in English as early as the eighteenth century. The common native languages—Bantu, Swahili and Yoruba—have a small literate audience. Yet their themes and concerns are of course based on what Langston Hughes calls the African heritage. Thus, when Patrice Lumumba stirred the Congolese natives with his verses on the white man's savagery and rapine, he wrote in the white man's language. In her anthology *Black Poets in French* Marie Collins explains simply: "More than 400 different tribal languages are spoken in Africa. . . . For the time being at least, French and English are a unifying means of communication." The languages of Alan Paton in the South and the francophone Kateb Yacine in the North are preferred to a continent-wide Babel.

Black African literature is of course the most visibly lacking component in the plans for World Literature. Its major oral tradition of myths, poetry and folktales —with its novels, derivative in form but local in character—could play a modest but useful role in World Literature classes. Any course on myths or oral literature could hardly exclude Africa. In the area of oral poetry Africa contributes odes of praise, oracles, incantations, dialogues and of course political polemic. Prose forms to consider would vary from the sociopolitical novel and autobiography to folktales, bestiaries, picaresque narratives and dilemma tales, where the hearers are invited to supply a conclusion.

Since Africa has contributed fewer literary works which satisfy the first of the dual criteria established by Fritz Strich (international acclaim and enduring values), African authors will play a minor role in the new Universal Literature curricula. Similar massive areas, like Indonesia with a population of 100,000,000, would be minimally represented. Yet even as we accept this reality, we reject the conclusion of Pichois and Rousseau (African literature was also curiously omitted from Étiemble's list quoted below), who write: "Les littératures africaines et polynésiennes occuperont d'autres chercheurs." This same French logic and prudence is expressed in their proverb, "Qui trop embrasse, mal étreint." Excepting this exclusion of Africa, one may agree with their general premise about World Literature: "l'histoire universelle de la littérature n'est pas l'histoire de la littérature universelle." Aficionados of African or Polynesian literatures can of course feature them in theses written for their degrees in World Literature.

No such linguistic capitulation as Africa's is visible in Asia and Indonesia. English, although an official "third" or "international" language in India, is now spoken by only some 5% of the population, although there is strong sentiment in the Indian P.E.N. Club for Indo-Anglian narrative and poetry, voiced typically by Bhabani Bhattacharya as follows: "The Indian writer must be free to use any language he likes, unharassed by criticism, either tacitly implied or plainly stated, and by any kind of compulsion, direct or indirect, which may come out of the strengthening mood of linguistic chauvinism." Yet nationalism is strong throughout Asia. The Indonesians have rejected Dutch for Bahasa Indonesia. Philippine writers reject Spanish and English for Pilipino. China retains its linguistic xenophobia. The greatest problem for World Literature courses in this area is that there are almost no Asian specialists who could participate knowing Asiatic languages other than their own—or even other Asian literatures, which is still more serious for literary internationalism. Fortunately the linguistic imperialism of

---

Ed. Note: Robert Clements's essay is an expanded version of his address to the *Books Abroad* Golden Anniversary session at the Modern Language Association convention in New York on 27 December 1976.

English and French still clings in Asia, though less than in Africa, of course, and this enables Asians to have indirect access to their continental literatures. Thus, at a recent triennial meeting of the Asian Writers' Conference, the Korean Ko Yo Sup complained that Koreans wishing to translate Asian works must get hold of the English, French or German versions of such works before turning them into Korean. So complicated are Asian languages even to close neighbors that Ryoto Sato of Tokyo claimed that it takes him an entire year to translate one Chinese novel into Japanese.

Thus Americans and Asians face the identical problem in mastering Asian literatures. This problem of linguistic intercommunication within Asia, where more natives know English or French than the *Sprachräume* of their neighbors, has reduced Indian Comparative Literature courses to feature English-Indian literary relations and led the University of Tokyo to emphasize English-Japanese relations, at least at the time I was last in Asia. (Similarly, the dean of Cairo University assured me that his teachers were secular pioneers in Comparative Literature through their Hispano-Arabic researches.)

As suggested above, the inability of Asians to read Asian languages other than their own parallels an ignorance of their neighbors' literatures. Thus the aforementioned joint NYU–Indian program of East-West Literature, although finalized on paper and assured a subsidy from the Fulbright Commission, lurched to a sudden halt. It was only during the FILLM congress in Australia years later that Das Gupta explained what had gone wrong: he could find no Indian colleagues who could or would read in the original (or conceivably even in translation) the various Asian epics and poetry which were to constitute the Asian component of the projected courses. I have of late wondered whether the World Literature courses we are hoping for in America might not be partially staffed by the young comparatists of Asian birth we are training in our own graduate schools. Their course work makes them familiar with the great texts of the Western Heritage, while their theses often encompass Indian, Chinese, Korean or Japanese authors.

Let me turn now to another dream we have all shared: the institute of World Literature. It has been widely accepted that a dissemination of such institutes would support the spread of the discipline of Universal Literature. Étiemble writes, "The Institute I dream of would naturally include Hellenists, Latinists, Egyptologists, Slavicists, Hindi and Bengali specialists, sinologists, Semiticists, Germanic, Romance, Turko-Mongol, Dravidian and Japanese scholars." Such an institute would have to be in Paris, says Étiemble (who ironically claims to be an internationalist surrounded by chauvinists). "In Paris only can one learn all those languages which I believe indispensable." London and New York are apparently out of the running.

It was this same dream, strengthened by some political motivation, which created Moscow's Gorki Institute of World Literature. It was Gorki's dream that such a clearinghouse could bring the peoples of the world together through literature. It is a research center, a library and an advisory resource to the state publishers on their extensive programs. Many of the books recommended for translation and printing derive from Asia, Africa and the uncommitted nations whose favor the government is currying. The Institute favors the "scientific" approach to literature, which Gorki chose to call social realism. In a *New York Times* report which I wrote after visiting the Institute I concluded that whereas the bibliographies and translations and researches cannot fail to be useful, the Institute's subjugation to political pressures cannot fail to hamper its prestige. It has not even begun to be effective in shaping curricula in World Literature.

Holland has also shown an interest in an institute of World Literature, as have some of us in New York. We had some meetings at New York University about such a project, encouraged by the many surrounding resource bodies: the Asian Literature Committee (chaired so effectively by Bonnie Crown), the Afro-American Research Institute, the American Library Association, P.E.N. Club International, UNESCO and so many others. However, it turned out that to carry on such an institute's five areas of activity (translation, publication, bibliography, symposia and study groups) would require an annual subsidy of $250,000. Such a project was impossible when NYU was selling its uptown campus as a measure for survival. *Nil desperandum*. An institute of World Literature in America, England or France would be useful, yet its absence need not hold back the tide of literary cosmopolitanism. There are other, more attainable projects to be carried out.

Here let us pause over an inevitable problem which will become intensified by the creation of World Literature curricula. Syllabi of all Comparative Literature courses, whether Western Heritage or East-West or World, must of course acquaint the student with a bibliography of background readings, comment and interpretation of the assigned texts. Time was when such a bibliography should be sure to include criticism by individuals of other nationality than the author evaluated. François Jost reminds us of the venerable attitude that "because foreign criticism is not immediately 'involved,' 'committed' or 'engaged,' it can sometimes reach more valid verdicts than indigenous criticism." It was traditional, he adds, to hold that the Abbé

Desfontaines wrote better criticism on Fielding than anyone in London and that Swinburne for this reason was a superior analyst of Hugo. Indeed it was thought that criticism of an author by a conational tended toward shortsighted or one-sided judgments, over-generous or over-hostile.

The politicization of literature after Marx to a point unheard of since feudal-clerical scholasticism makes a luxury of discussions such as the one above. Such politicization may have embarrassed even its chief apostle Gorki, who in September 1923 invited Stefan Zweig to write an article for *Beseda*, a journal which, he assured, "has nothing to do with politics." Controlled criticism, often fickle, spares insiders no more than outsiders. One day the *Hungarian Quarterly* equates József Lengyel with "some of modern literature's greatest writers," whereas the next he is a villain whose *Confrontation* must be suppressed. Literary criticism of outsiders is best illustrated by the two massive cultures of Russia and China, both of which would be inevitably well represented in East-West or World Literature curricula. Let me illustrate how this replacement of criticism by polemics becomes a very real problem for the future development of World Literature.

The monthly journal *Chinese Literature*, which I have received from Peking since 1968, is the most valid document from which to learn the trends of Chinese letters and criticism. It contains original writing in the form of poetry, narrative, drama, filmscripts and opera libretti, such as the famous *Red Lantern*, recalling the war of resistance against Japan. Perhaps its most vigorous element is its literary criticism. Indeed the section reviewing books has borne the significant rubric "Literary Criticism and Repudiation." To illustrate its international tenets of criticism, we shall sample expressions of disapproval of three books well known to the West: Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Ilya Ehrenburg's *People and Life* and Konstantin Simonov's *Days and Nights*, the epochal novel centered on the Battle of Stalingrad.

Russia's third Nobel laureate is branded by critic Shih Hung-yu as a counterrevolutionary and lackey of revisionism who has been betraying the October Revolution since his 1926 *Tales of the Don*. After a lengthy indictment, the review concludes: "Today we expose Sholokhov to the bright light of Mao Tse-tung's thought, and tomorrow Sholokhov will not be able to escape a trial before the revolutionary peoples of the Soviet Union. It is certain that the Soviet people will sweep him into the dust-bin of history, alongside Brezhnev, Kosygin, and company." Critic Chung Yen-ping turns his attention to Ehrenburg's memoirs written under the brief thaw of Khrushchev, memoirs arraigning that Stalinism which the Maoists still view as a beneficial dictatorship of the proletariat. Chung's repudiation reads: "This big poisonous weed is a long, revolting series of anecdotes dealing with certain historical events and figures from the time of the February Revolution to the eve of the Great Patriotic War. Ehrenburg's intention was to borrow the tongues of the dead to attack the road of the October Revolution, to resuscitate ghosts to take part in the fight for a capitalist restoration." To clinch his point, Chung recalls that the revered pioneer writer Lu Hsün (called by Mao in 1940 "an unprecedented hero on the cultural front") dismissed Ehrenburg thirty years ago as a right-wing bourgeois author.

Finally, critic Hsieh Sheng-wen demythicizes the Siege of Stalingrad as chronicled by Simonov. "Analyzed and examined critically with the sharp weapon of Mao Tse-tung's thought, *Days and Nights* proves to be a black specimen of revisionist war literature, and Simonov a cowardly traitor who traded upon the glory and dignity of the soldiers of the Red Army." In sum, by an insistence on the people's sufferings, Simonov is accused of interpreting Stalingrad as "an unprecedented catastrophe which brought the people nothing but death and destruction" instead of viewing it, in Chairman Mao's words, as "the turning-point in the history of all mankind."

This type of criticism obviously must be prevented from plaguing and impeding the development of World Literature. Such polemicization of criticism, albeit more subtly presented, has found its way into Comparative Literature congresses in both Eastern and Western Europe. A great effort is needed to conciliate views to the point of producing intellectually honest manuals, literary histories and bibliographies for the implementation of future courses in World Literature. The bibliographies on symbolism, Renaissance literature and other topics now being undertaken by the International Comparative Literature Association will hopefully demonstrate that zones of varying political persuasion can produce useful tools for the study of World Literature. If not, then the syllabus and bibliography for a course in contemporary poetry will be different in Western Europe and America from those in Russia or in China.

Mention of bibliographies brings us back to what we were characterizing as "more attainable projects to be carried out." The first and most lengthy step is to undertake a census of the texts available for a pilot graduate program in World Literature, as well as existing translations of these texts. Bilingual texts will be especially desirable. The M.A. in World Literature could in prospect require a knowledge of seventy-five or more texts on the part of a candidate, including twenty to thirty in his own native literature. The Ph.D. would

require considerably more but would demand also a far greater number of background and theoretical works, which ideally should exist also in translations. The books selected for these literary courses are those which, as Fritz Strich has qualified them, have already won international recognition and display enduring values. In addition, they will be clearcut examples of the themes, forms and movements which will structure the World Literature courses.

For this essential first step there are many bibliographical tools. UNESCO has been most useful in two ways, not only by the remarkable registry of translations all over the world in its *Index Translationum* but by its remarkable *Connaissance de l'Orient* series. Other bibliographical tools include *Books in Print*, England's *Bookseller* and the European national bibliographies subsidized by governments. New retrieval-of-information techniques in our libraries will be most helpful. Microfilm and microfiche bibliographies will facilitate our enormous task. The Franklin Book Programs, a nonprofit organization with fifteen offices on three continents, has made a useful contribution. The P.E.N. Clubs in many corners of the world publish literary bulletins, some of which I receive and which contain important bibliographical news. University presses and those of learned societies will have to be canvassed. Our own *Books Abroad* as *World Literature Today* will continue its dissemination of information useful to World Literature courses. All the bibliographical sources of the West will require investigation in our search for translations of Asian and African works into a Western language, hopefully into one of the three foreign languages which we shall continue to require of our doctoral candidates. We are at this moment at NYU entering a request for a two-year subsidy to undertake such a census.

Naturally, the same preparations for World Literature courses have to be undertaken as we have all done for Comparative Literature courses: curricular requirements established, course syllabi written, lectures, readings and reports determined. The technical aspects of World Literature we are all familiar with. It might be useful if we in addition requested the ICLA or FILLM —or possibly even our friends in Oklahoma, who have demonstrated that they can achieve what is impossible for others: the compilation of a roster-by-region of comparatists whose knowledge of literature bridges East and West or two totally dissimilar areas.

Once the syllabi are constructed and the bibliographies compiled, we confront one last time the linguistic vehicle of our courses. We have committed ourselves to the principle that the texts of World Literature, like those of the Western Heritage, should be taught by instructors who read them in the original. Let us see how this principle operates in a hypothetical course on the world's great national epic poems, perhaps the most challenging and productive genre of all. Ideally, in a course including six Western and four Asian epics (leaving Africa and other areas in abeyance for our demonstration) a polyglot Western and a polyglot Asian scholar should suffice for the teaching. However, we have already observed that Asian professors usually choose as their second or third foreign language one from the West. Thus the course planner faces one of three solutions.

First, he may resort to group teaching by instructors of differing nationalities and specializations not too alien to epic, a practice occasionally tried in Comparative Literature departments. This is sometimes possible in a large metropolitan university or community. Yet there are inevitable difficulties of scheduling, teaching load and lack of remuneration. Furthermore, a guest lecturer cannot always grasp the direction a course is taking and make the most pertinent contribution. Second, the instructor may lean on foreign-language-speaking graduate students as resource personnel, entrusting to them the reading aloud of a text, adjudicating the assigned translation (when necessary) and making further clarifications. Finally, the instructor may build his course with a maximum of Western epics (nine? ten?) he can read and teach himself and take a chance on finding a willing *suppléant* to teach the others. In case of failure, he must hope to have assigned the best possible translations and rest his case at that point. Certainly, if he feels that *Gilgamesh* must be included as one of the world's greatest national epics (and one which probably influenced the *Odyssey*), he may be forgiven for not reading Babylonian, Hittite or Hurrian. It must be conceded that in Comparative (and especially World) Literature there will be rare cases when an instructor will have to discuss a book he cannot read in the original, whether an assigned text or a background commentary. As the first Report on Professional Standards of the American Comparative Literature Association put it, "It would be highly puristic to exclude some reading from more remote languages in translation."

Paradoxically, this point is often raised by carping nonlinguists as yet another objection to comparative studies. It is a logical and facile argument, like the insistence that no graduate student in fine arts should work from slide projections but only from studying the original paintings or sculpture, or that historians, philosophers, anthropologists and theologians should not use sources they cannot read in the original. We all stand behind the principle, but it is of course a question of degree. For someone to teach a course, graduate or undergraduate, on Dante without knowing Italian and

Latin is unethical and reprehensible. Yet we should not suggest that the planner of the course on world epic described above abandon it. Many English or joint departments which administer the undergraduate literature-in-translation courses impose the *quot opera, tot linguae* principle on graduate literature departments while their instructors abandon it totally at the undergraduate level. When we have developed several World Literature graduate programs in several major universities, we shall have a good idea of what constitutes an ethical compromise on this issue.

Rather than conclude with a bad conscience, I return for a moment to those 91% of college courses entitled "World Literature" listed by the SCCLA. If one is truly devoted to literature, one can only have mixed feelings about them. One may object that they tend to follow without method the random Homer-to-Arthur-Miller zigzag path through Western literature. One may object that they are often taught by instructors who do not read easily two or three European languages, that they usually require not one single command of a foreign language on the part of the student, that they are tokenist in their approach (see below). Still, any literature is good literature in these days of simplified college curricula and abolition of the foreign-language requirement. Furthermore, the schools' misuse of the term "World Literature" is not entirely of their own doing.

Our textbook compilers and editors have indeed decided that "World Literature" is a "sexy" rubric, to quote one publisher. Time was when a Western Heritage anthology would be called by Ginn *The Heritage of European Literature*, by Lippincott *Readings in Western Civilization* or by Ronald Press *Literature of Western Civilization*. When the dike broke, Dryden (*Masterworks of World Literature*), Norton (*World Masterpieces*), Odyssey (*Types of World Literature*) and others opportunistically claimed a global viewpoint which was totally lacking. More ethically entitled were Scott, Foresman's *The World in Literature*, American Book's *World Literature*, Holt-Rinehart-Winston's *Heritage of World Literature* and Macmillan's *Anthology of World Literature*, which led the American undergraduate to a few well-edited samplings of texts from the Orient and the Near East. There seems to be no reason why publishers cannot separate such clearly identifiable areas of literature as Western, East-West and World and describe their anthologies accordingly.

We are sometimes soothed by assurances that such piecemeal phenomena as Pound's interest in Japanese haiku, Yeats's interest in Tagore, Joyce's knowledge of the Koran testify that we are on the way to World Literature. To paraphrase Joseph Bédier's shattering question, one may ask, "Mais où sont les programmes d'études?" Once we organize our courses and syllabi and get on with the task, getting the bugs out of them, as the scientists say, we shall achieve Ivar Ivask's goal of World Literature today. Goethe's challenging words of January 1827 echo within us: "The epoch of world literature is at hand, and everyone must hasten its approach." We are getting closer. As the Russian proverb reminds us, "Patience is the mother of genius."

World Literature courses as we have conceived them in this essay are intended for gifted and motivated graduate students. A candidate in this outermost extension of Comparative Literature is bound to be an elitist. Nowadays, when one of our students obtains his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, I caution him, "If you keep at it for another ten or fifteen years, you may be a comparatist in your forties." The World Literature professionist will be in command of his discipline by his fifties. And even then there will be uncharted territories beckoning him or her further onward.

New York University